S O I L C O N S E R V A T I O N D I G E S T

(Monthly newsletter of the California-Nevada Region)
issued at Headquarters, Region #10, Santa Paula, California

Volume 2, No. 7 April 1936

U.S. D E P A R T M E N T O F A G R I C U L T U R E

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Harry E. Reddick, Regional Conservator Santa Paula
Charles W. Petit, District Manager Santa Paula
R. B. Cozzens, District Manager Watsonville

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA

SCS COOPERATES WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

Cooperation

"The soil conservation work of a state is carried out under a state soil conservation program outlined by a State Soil Conservation Advisory Committee and approved by the Soil Conservation Service. The state committee is composed of the State Coordinator of the Soil Conservation Service, the State Agricultural Extension Director, and the Director of the State Experiment Station.

"The educational phase of the work is conducted co-operatively under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agricultural Extension Service. The research phase of the work is carried out under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Experiment Station.

"Field personnel may be employed co-operatively or assigned by one or the other co-operating agency. All policies in the state are outlined by the state committee in conformity with legislative acts and regulations governing the same." - H. H. Bennett.

County Agricultural Conservation Association

Members of voluntary Soil Conservation Associations should understand that these associations have no connection whatsoever with County Agricultural Conservation Associations. Information on the latter associations can be obtained from any county farm advisor.

Wild Life Exhibit

A carefully prepared exhibit showing the relation of wild life conservation to soil conservation was loaned by the SCS Washington office to Region 10. This exhibit was received on March 7 and has aroused a great deal of interest wherever it has been shown.

The exhibit consists of a series of eight dioramas, presented in sequence, which strikingly contrast wild life conditions on eroded farms offering little food and shelter to game with farms on which soil conservation is practiced. It is on the latter farms that birds and animals secure the most favorable environment.

Panels on either side of the center section of the exhibit have colored transparencies showing game on farms where soil erosion is controlled. The variety of wild life on such farms is portrayed.

Conservation of the soil means conservation of wild life as well because the trees, shrubs, and grasses planted to hold the soil in place offer ideal shelter and food for quail, pheasants, and other game.

Thus far the exhibit has been shown at the following places:

Chamber of Commerce Building, Los Angeles for one week. Leamington Hotel, Oakland, three days during convention of Garden Club Federation of California. Following this it was put on display for seven more days at the request of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, then in the lobby of the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, during the meeting of the National Emergency Council.

Interested spectators viewed the exhibit at all of the showings.

Nevada Representative on Regional Board

A meeting of the Regional Board of the Soil Conservation Service for California-Nevada was held at Santa Paula April 6. Professor George Hardman, Head of the Department of Irrigation, University of Nevada, was elected to the Regional Board.

1934 Reconnaissance Erosion Survey

Numerous references have been made recently in newspapers and current magazines to the reconnaissance erosion survey made in 1934. Frequently the figures given are misinterpreted as no qualifying statements are made to present them in their true light.

It must be recognized that the 1934 survey was made from a national standpoint and was not a detailed survey of counties or smaller land units. At the time it was made there was almost no information relative to the distribution of soil erosion from a national standpoint.

In tables given with this survey a statement is inserted immediately preceding the figures, showing that the erosion class designated is applicable to 25 percent or more of each area delineated on the map. Consequently the erosion figures given must be interpreted as representing either a critical condition or a prevailing condition, and <u>not as exact acreages for specific conditions.</u>

On Soil Conservation Service demonstration areas detailed soil conservation surveys are now being

made of individual properties.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA PROJECTS

Corralitos
Sebastopol
English Hills
Placerville

Tree planting was pushed in the Northern District projects (Corralitos, Sebastopol, Placerville, and English Hills) the first half of March as soil and weather conditions were very conducive to planting. This program is complete for the spring season. A total of 153,431 trees were planted on 550 acres during the winter months. 76,375 trees were planted during March.

Soil and Erosion Survey

Over 948 acres were covered by soil conservation surveys on the Northern projects during March and detailed reports written for fifteen of the farms surveyed.

Corralitos

Virtually all of the acreage signed up for reforestation in the Corralitos project has been planted, many large barrancas are seeded to grasses or planted to either shrubs or trees, and most of the barrancas where pipe and wire structures or canal drops are used have been planted with willow cuttings.

Placerville

Mrs. Mary Cook, one of the co-operators in the Placerville project, was surprised to find how satisfactory grade ditches are in connection with orchard operations. She has found no inconvenience in spraying or hauling brush. In cultivating her orchard this spring Mrs. Cook intends leaving the ditches as they are rather than cultivating them out.

On the Placerville project 275 acres were covered by the detailed soil conservation survey in March. During the same period 2 permanent terrace outlet structures were completed, 2184 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels, 3 permanent dams, and 6 acres of forestation planting.

Corralitos

On the Corralitos project the following work was accomplished during March: 112 acres newly contoured-tilled; 80.4 acres agreed to be retired to forest; 114 acres cultivated land actually retired to forest; 45 permanent terrace outlets; 2441 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels completed, 3 permanent dams, gully control, constructed; 207 acres forestation planting; 14 acres gully planting.

English Hills

On the English Hills project the following work was accomplished during March: 20 permanent ter-

race outlet structures completed; 2363 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels; 16 permanent dams constructed.

Sebastopol

On the Sebastopol project the following work was accomplished during March: Over 218 acres of soil conservation surveys made, 2 acres of cultivated land retired to forest, 2.5 acres of pasture land retired to forest, 41.1 acres agreed to be put into erosion-resisting crops, 18 permanent terrace outlet structures completed, 2756 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels completed, 2 permanent dams constructed, and 2.5 acres of forestation planting.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT PROJECTS

Soil Surveys

Soil conservation surveys were continued on the Vista, Aliso Creek, and Lompoc projects during March. A total of approximately 4,030 acres were surveyed covering 26 farms. Individual soil conservation survey maps with their attached legends were prepared covering all farms placed under co-operative agreement during the month.

Soil Conservation surveys were made of 2245 acres on the Aliso Creek project in March, 350 acres on the Vista project, and 1435 acres on the Lompoc project.

Watershed and Hydrologic Studies Las Posas

At the present time there are 16 silt and run-off gaging stations in the Las Posas demonstration project. Records from 17 Government and private rain gages are being kept. Nine wells are being observed for percolation and fluctuation in ground water levels. The object of these studies is to correlate the effects of proper land-use and erosion control practices with water supply and crop productivity.

Lompoc

On the Lompoc project the following work was accomplished during March: 1200 square yards of gully bank-sloping, 2 permanent dams constructed, 2935 lineal feet gully diversion ditches completed, 686 cubic yards of earth excavated from channels and ditches for flood control, 382 acres of tree planting, 520 acres rodent controlled, and, 8.2 miles of grade line surveyed.

Palos Verdes

On the Palos Verdes project the following work was accomplished during March: 195 square yards of gully bank-sloping, 5 gully dams constructed, 4840 square yards of gully seeding and sodding, 172,304 square yards of gully tree-planting, 1000 lineal feet of gully diversion ditches completed, 1307 acres rodent

controlled, and, 1.4 miles of terraces.

Las Posas

On the Las Posas project during March the following work was accomplished: 22.50 acres cultivated land retired to forest, 10.34 increased acreage agreed to be put in erosion-resisting crops, 12 permanent terrace outlet structures completed, 4 permanent dams, gully control, constructed, 3,436 lineal feet diversion ditches, gully control, 235.5 acres forestation planting, 207.0 acres gully planting.

Arroyo Grande

On the Arroyo Grande project the following work was accomplished during March: 3.37 miles of terraces constructed, 16 permanent terrace outlet structures completed, 21,050 square yards of terrace outlets seeded and sodded, 1490 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels completed, 3 permanent dams, gully control, constructed, 2177 lineal feet diversion ditches, gully control, completed, 33 acres forestation planting, 2.85 acres gully planting.

Aliso Creek

On the Aliso Creek project the following work was accomplished during March: 690 acres covered by detailed erosion survey, 183.92 square yards of terrace outlets seeded and sodded, 1370 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels completed, 10 permanent dams, gully control, constructed, 1830 lineal feet diversion ditches, gully control, completed, 32.49 acres ditch bank seeded and sodded, 118.75 acres forestation planting, 111.57 acres gully planting.

Vista

On the Vista project the following work was accomplished during March: 589 square yards of gully bank-sloping, 14 permanent dams, gully, 234,256 square yards of gully seeding and sodding, 175,000 square yards of gully tree-planting, 1224 lineal feet of terrace outlet channels, 24 permanent terrace outlet structures, 7 acres of tree-planting, forestation.

NEVADA PROJECTS

Ursine

Since the start of work on this area on March 2 the following soil conservation activities have been accomplished: 435 brush and earth filled dams completed, 16 miles of profile run through Dry, Rose, Eagle and Spring Valleys. It is estimated 1,200 brush dams will be necessary to cover the watershed drained by Dry Wash leading into the town of Ursine in Eagle Valley. It is believed that these dams will not only control soil washing on hundreds of acres of fertile land in the valleys, but will immeasurably increase the growth of range vege-

tation by the retention of run-off.

Crystal Springs

Work on this area commenced October 15, 1935, with a crew of CCC boys from the camp at Panaca. This crew returned to headquarters February 20, 1936. While at Crystal Springs the boys cut 1,500 posts and constructed 16 miles of truck roads. Security wage workers were started on the area January 27, 1936. Since that date they have the following list of soil conservation accomplishments: 15 spreading dams of rock constructed, 45 brush and earth filled dams, 27 miles of truck roads, 51½ miles of water spreading terraces.

Thirteen acres of range have been reseeded with crested wheat, blue stem, bulbous blue, and smooth brome grass. A five acre demonstrational and seed testing plot which will be protected from rodents is in process of completion.

Bunkerville

One spring has been developed on the Bunkerville area and 450 feet of three-fourths inch pipe has been laid to a concrete watering trough. Two more springs are being developed from which a 5½ mile 2" pipe line will carry water to a storage tank and watering troughs on the area.

During March the following work was done: 3.5 miles of truck trails, 301 small dams, 251,076 square yards of gully seeding and sodding, 94.596 square yards of gully tree-planting, and 4.5 miles of lineal surveys.

Panaca

On the Panaca area the following work was accomplished during March: 319 small dams, 29,040 square yards of gully seeding and sodding, 505 square yards of gully tree-planting, and 5 miles of lineal surveys.

SOIL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the Associations listed in previous monthly reports the following has been added:

Highland SCA

Highland Soil Conservation Association - (Santa Cruz County)

Wm. Adams, President
Karl H. Hummel, Vice President
R. L. Dodge, Secretary-Treasurer
J. G. Lewis
E. Myer